

535 The only thing to say about the dances of the Batwa is that in general they resemble the dances of the Bahutu. The Batwa are very enthusiastic dancers, and in their solo dances they perform the strangest gyrations and leaps. Among them also the onlookers accompany the dance by shaking pumpkin rattles and singing short stanzas. This is done in a noisier and wilder fashion than among the Bahutu and the Batussi.

534 I have already mentioned a zither-like instrument, the inanga, with which the Barundi often accompany their solo dances. It consists of a flat, longish bowl of bark or wood. Six to eight cords of sheep gut or sinew are strung across the bowl. We call it a bowl zither (No. 6 of Plate 47). Usually the wood is decorated with a few simple linear decorations; and several holes are pierced in the bottom which are supposed to [68] add richness to the tone. It is noteworthy that the wooden bowl of the instrument is carved by the Batwa while the Bahutu string the cords. Van der Burgt infers from this that the inanga zither was originally the cultural property of the Batwa and was taken over by the Bahutu later (No. 19, p. 387). It seems more probable, judging from its geographical distribution, that it is the cultural property of the Bahima (see p. 158 [not translated]; it occurs both in the north of the Bahima region among the Banjankole and in the south among the Wafipa [Fipa]).

The zither is played in a sitting position. The instrument is placed upon the knees, and the strings are plucked with both hands after the player has tuned them correctly by letting them in or out. The tuning is determined entirely by what kind of singing is intended and by the pitch of the singer's voice. I have not noticed that the strings were tuned to any particular sequence of notes in the scale.

● 533 As in Europe, there are many persons among the Batundi who play an instrument, but only a few can do it really well. There are professional musicians only at the courts of the chiefs. There the musicians, who are predominantly Batwa, play the drums, flutes, and zithers. The same is true in Ruanda.

● 533

The playing of the zither is almost always accompanied by singing which is done in a rather low voice, mostly in a minor key which is the characteristic key of the Negroes. Neither the voices nor the manner of performing are good. Either the song in short stanzas deals with some local incident, a current event, a person, a personal experience, etc., or it is one of the old traditional Barundi songs whose lyrics are

(198) spoken in the Old Kirundi dialect (see p. 148). Apparently they are nothing but a series of unconnected nouns, adjectives, wishes, orders, etc., the meaning of which is not quite clear any more either to the singer or to the listeners (No. 19, p. 97).

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The ox horn (ikihuha) is the real war or alarm horn. Its narrow end is provided with a hole, and this is the form generally in use in East Africa. Such signal horns are also widely used by the caravans.

The clarinet-like flute (ikihuschama), which is used only as a musical instrument, is much rarer. It is a wooden tube, a third of a meter long, with a funnel-shaped opening. Its lower end has three holes so that various notes can be blown (Nos. 3 and 4 of Plate 47).

On the other hand, a short fife (umwironge) is much more common. Like our fifes, it has a hole near one end which one blows into and two or three holes at the other end which may be stopped alternately. Flutes and fifes are seldom played singly but usually in an orchestra together with drums of which I shall speak later (p. 70).

Reed pipes are more children's toys than real instruments. Their two ends are plugged, and they have a hole in the middle. They are usually carved by boys. Rattle boards (urukajamba) belong in the same category. They are used particularly for accompanying the dances of the girls. These rattle boards are made of pieces of reed arranged in two separate layers which are kept apart by means of a piece of reed placed obliquely so that there is an empty space between the layers. Dry kernels of corn are placed inside. They produce a sharp rattling sound against the reed walls when the box-shaped rattle board is shaken. Rattle sticks are also often used. They consist of sticks

534 to which small pumpkin rattles are fastened (Nos. 1 and 5 of Plate 47). At religious [69] ceremonies single pumpkin rattles are swung (Plate 25a).

Finally drum (ingoma, inkiranji) is both the rarest and the most highly valued instrument. It is not only used for accompanying dances but also as the main orchestral instrument of the chiefs. Often it has great religious significance. The drum [202] is not used at all for the purpose of signaling or transmitting news. In Urundi there is no "drum language" as there is in other African countries.

Drums are made out of a section of a tree trunk which has been cut off straight at one end rounded off at the other end. The inside of the trunk is hollowed out with carving knives, leaving the fairly thin outer walls. It is then placed on a conical wooden pedestal so that the whole thing has approximately the shape of a "wine glass." The grain mortars are similarly shaped. The open upper end is covered with a piece of cattle hide, shaved thin and stretched tightly across, which was soaked in warm water beforehand. The hide is stretched tight by little wooden pegs fastened around the edge of the drum (No. 2 of Plate 47). Two wooden sticks are used as drum sticks.

● 533 If the drum is to be used for accompanying a dance --
535 which is almost always a solo dance, not a group dance -- two, three, or four men beat on it, each alternating quickly with the other in beating the drum with his two sticks in a certain rhythm. Each drummer uses a beat different from that of the next; each always uses only his particular beat. Thus, if there are four drummers, they produce a drum stanza consisting of four different tempos which are repeated until the "drum leader" starts a new stanza by introducing a new beat. The louder it booms, the better. After a short time one of the drummers suddenly jumps up while the others continue drumming; he makes all kinds of leaps, stamps on the ground, creeps forward, runs back and shakes his drumsticks about as though he were possessed. Just as suddenly, he jumps back to his drum and continues drumming with his partners. Then another drummer follows suit or one of the listeners surrounding the scene, and so

533 on for hours. The drum concert and drum dance are hardly
535 ever accompanied by singing (No. 19, p. 388).

534 In Urundi and Ruanda drums are such a rarity that an
experienced observer wrote as recently as 1901: "In Urundi'
drums are unknown" (Kreuz und Schwert [Cross and Sword],
1900, p. 212). During my own two months' journey through
central Urundi, I never heard a single drumbeat. This can
be explained easily by the fact that there remain only a few
small areas in this country where trees still exist that are large
enough to make drums (and boats). It is probably because of
534 their high value that the possession of drums has become a
554 privilege of chiefs and of the king. Neither the "people" of
778 the Barundi (Bahutu or Batussi) nor the Batwa are permitted to
own drums. A special role is reserved for the king's drum.
This drum, in addition to the spear, the finger ring or brace-
let (wrist disc), and the holy wooden milk vessels, is part
of the royal insignia which the ruler bequeaths to his successor
(No. 19, p. 524). This "holy" drum is a kind of Palladium
of the realm and, as such, it is given the name akarjenda. It
is very big and made from the wood of a special tree. This
drum is regarded as the seat of the protective spirit of the
realm, and solemn vows are made by this "drum spirit"
akarjenda (No. 19, p. 388). Special guards are charged with
taking care of [70] this royal drum (see p. 187 [not translated]).
It is always kept at the residence of the king and, together with
the holy spears and the holy milk vessels, it also accompanies
him on his trips (report by Captain von Langenn). The hides
used for the holy drums [sic] are taken exclusively from the
cattle of the so-called "holy herd" (see p. 44).

533 Neither van der Burgt nor any other observer reports
having heard of the combination of several drums and other
instruments to form an orchestra, but natives assured me that
such an orchestra existed at the royal court and that it con-
sisted of Batwa. I consider this very likely since there is such
an orchestra, a combination of several differently tuned drums
and flutes, at the residence of Musinga, king of Ruanda. The
members of the orchestra are Batwa. It sounds very melodious

- 533 and is quite impressive when, beginning with one muffled drum, the other drums gradually join in through a long rhythmic sequence, the sound of the orchestra rises to its full force, and then the flutes join at a shrill pitch. The sound of the orchestra then gradually diminishes, one drum after the other falls silent, until finally the muffled beat of the first drum softly fades away. At night, however, the tired European may be driven almost to despair by this drum orchestra. Everyone who has been a guest of Musinga will remember this night music.

We have already discussed the musical aspect of the songs with which instrumental music and dances are accompanied (p. 68). At this point I would like to add something about the content of these songs as taken down by van der Burgt. He states that the lyrics of these songs, sung mostly in unconnected Old Kirundi words (see pp. 124, 148), are not even understood in their original meaning by most of the Barundi themselves. A question about their meaning is usually answered by: "It means nothing, it is only a song." Only those who have been initiated in the esoteric meaning by the learned men, sorcerers and priests, have some understanding of the true meaning of these songs (No. 19, p. 97).

For example, these are the lyrics of a song accompanied by a zither:

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"Ntiwarima uy' umwaka, ntiwarima.
ninanga usiwire. umugaso utasimbe.
yagese ku' nama. isenge iritschjika."

(Translation: The field is not cultivated this year, i. e., war has been declared. Chief Ninanga stays here. The water ditch does not flow, i. e., the ditch forming the border is dry. It passes close to the homestead. The amulet is broken, i. e., a bad omen for the war.)

In contrast to these old traditional songs, the songs improvised during the dance generally have some connection with current events and are sung in the modern colloquial language. Even these are not coherent songs either but merely short interrupted sentences and thoughts.

533 This does not apply to religious songs which are sung at certain cult ceremonies. We shall discuss them in the chapter on "Religion" (p. 127).

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461 Often, but not always, singing of the simplest form accompanies work done by several persons with the object of concentrating the individual's energies by means of the rhythm or to make for greater perseverance. For instance, this may be done while moving heavy objects, when hoeing the field in a group, rowing a boat, cutting trees, etc. Usually the song consists of only two or three words which are first sung by one person in the group and are then imitated by the others until the choir leader gives them a new word, a new "idea."

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Chapter 6

Means of Communication, Trade, Handicrafts

1. Means of Communication

487 In a country with as little internal and external trade as Urundi the means of communication are naturally very primitive. The roads connecting villages or districts with each other are simple, narrow, trampled footpaths which circumvent all obstacles by turning to the right or left. Wherever this is impossible, as, for instance, in the extremely rocky quartzite regions of central and east Urundi, obstacles are never moved out of the way but are simply left there, and the traveler has to climb over them. These paths in the quartzite regions are, therefore, extremely difficult to traverse for the non-native burden carrier in a caravan or even for a European. The difficulties are further increased by the fact that all the paths of Urundi and Ruanda tend to reach the hill ridges and highland plains which predominate in this area by the shortest possible route in order to proceed along there with greater ease. Since many valleys are deeply cut and have steep sides, the paths which go

644 The observers add that most of those weapons and objects were once
778 the personal property of vanquished princes and kings, hence their value in the eyes of the victors.

The Hamitic monarchs have also preserved carefully the skulls of beeves whose sacrifice was established as favorable, and the gourds containing the gall bladder (igisabo), the swollen parts of the large intestine (ishira), and certain other parts (ibiranga) of the immolated animals. Those hermetically sealed gourds make highly effective talismans.

534 The names of the main drums are as follows:
552 Kalinga, the palladium-drum.
644 Chyimamugezi, former palladium-drum of King Gihanga.
778 Nyamigezi, the palladium-drum of Yuhi-Mazimpaka.
Butare ("strong as a rock").
Gissabarwanda ("which reverberates throughout the land").
Sinkangimilyango, "I do not inspire fear into the (local) clans."
Mpatsibihugu, "I went to the defense of the land."
Kiragutse, "It spreads out" (that is to say, "It is of enormous

size").

[202]/374/ Ndamutsa, "I salute him (the king)", - from the verb kulamutsa, "to salute," because it is pounded in the morning around nine o'clock, when the king appears before his subjects to hear their good wishes and listen to their grievances. It was also used to herald executions of the convicted, a spectacle which formerly drew the interest of most of the court.

5. The official drummers are chosen, like the afore-mentioned keepers, from the Abiru clan. They play on the Ndamutsa drum, hence their title of Abalamutsa. They live in the hut consecrated to the late King Lwabugiri (he died in 1895). That is where the ordinary drums are kept, those that are struck from four o'clock in the morning onward, in accordance with an immemorial custom.

6. The court chroniclers, or annalists. Their professional name is Abachurabgenge, "knowledge makers." They form a sort of closed clan whose members alternate by the king's side and acquaint him with the history of the land and the deeds and actions of his

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"His high-pitched, excited voice was heard above all the others when the Batwa, their dance over and their arms uplifted toward Musinga, all shouted at the same time, according to custom, one of these traditional phrases, 'I shall go to my death for the king!' 'When I fight, I kill twenty men!' 'I can no longer keep count of those I have defeated!' 'I shed the greatest amount of blood!'"

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[534]

c. These musicians who are reputed to be the most skillful are retained at court or called there frequently. Their instruments are most primitive. They have a flute (umwironge), the stringed instrument so widespread in equatorial Africa (inanga), and another instrument, more primitive still, the isenge (ocarina type) from which they draw unpleasant sounds. People originally from Usui introduced small drums into the country which they beat with their fingers and which were a great success with the king.

The cithara players are the favorite musicians of the populace.

- They sing and accompany themselves on their instrument.

The themes of these songs are varied. They deal with the exploits of heroes, the national wars, and even with various /450/ ordinary events of everyday life. The subject is sometimes borrowed from dramas of which the essence and form are common, but they nevertheless draw the attention of listeners because they parallel their own mental attitudes.

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We cite here one of those pieces. We heard it recited by a cithara player. He was seated amidst about ten of his companions, who all plucked their stringed instruments together and repeated certain words in chorus at the end of each phrase. The soloist sang, "A leopard left the woods long after sunset.

"He crossed Goko Stream near the village of Murunda (in the Kanage region).

"He came to the Gishwati country in the early evening.

"He came to the hut of the man called 'I am the man who knows how to handle difficulties' (Nziguye).

"The beast knocked at the door with his paw.

"The daughter of the house (recognized and) addressed the animal.

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"Her father said, 'My child, what you have done is bad.

"'Evil will come unto us.'

"The carnivore knocked on the door for the second time.

"He entered the hut and hid near the rush wall (that divides the inside of the hut in two compartments).

"The woman got up to take a brand from the fire.

"The leopard leaped upon her and took her outside.

"With his claws he tore out her entrails (imushing' urwara mu nda, hava mw' umwana).

"The father got up to go to her aid.

"The animal had dragged his quivering prey into the banana grove.

"The husband, after a search, found nothing but a few blood-stained copper bracelets.

"After a period of time the feline returned. /451/

"The master of the house was not caught napping.

"His mind had been active since the accident.

"It was in vain that the leopard brought along Jack Rabbit (the prototype of the resourceful rogue who has a thousand tricks up his sleeve).

"He came near the hut.

"Nziguye ('I know how to handle difficulties') (1) had dug a

1. Nziguye is the substantive of the verb kwizigura, which means "to get out of trouble," "to escape danger through one's own resources."

deep ditch (covered with light branches).

"The leopard vanished into the trap and died there."

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195 d. Aside from the bards and official chroniclers already mentioned, there are also at court some literary jousters who speak a refined language, who are appointed to the king's side, and who attend to him in shifts.

They are called Abasizi, from the word gusiga, which means "to speak a refined language." They expound the events of the day

644 In addition, they are the born protectors selected by the
484 Hamitic princes to ward off the bad luck which threatens them in cer-
619 tain circumstances. The Banyarwanda, indeed, have mystic defenders
of this sort who are chosen among the members of a tribe alien to
theirs.

Those individuals are believed to have the power to ward off
the imaginary dangers which threaten human beings. They are called
abase (singular umuse). The Banyarwanda call upon their omnipotence
at times of death (1), a loss of fortune, the plundering of a herd, the

[764]

1. In the Bugoyi the umuse, or protector, removes from the hut of the deceased the main post upon which the dead owner liked to lean, the piece of wood (umusego) which stands at the head of the bed, the log that was used as a chair, and the small piece of wood that surmounted the roof of the hut. All of this is laid upon the grave.

building of a hut, the giving of a name to a child, his teething, the celebration of a marriage, etc.

Since the Bagessera are the protectors of the Hamitic princes, it is understandable that the monarchs should seek their hospitality.

If there are no members of that family /in the locality/, the king stays with the Bazigaba, whose ancestor Kazigaba was the /497/ brother of Kagessera, founder of the Bagessera clan. If neither are to be found in the area through which the monarch is traveling, the latter resorts, in this order, to the Banyiginya, the Bega, or lastly, the Bakono.

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While traveling, the king is accompanied by an honor guard of Batutsi, Bahutu, and Batwa, who sleep around the royal hut at night.

- [533] Five or six drummers walk at the head of the procession, beating occasionally on their instruments. The drums are also played at nightfall and at the first birdsong in the morning.

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53 The court orchestra is made up of Bahutu and Batwa. The singers are Batwa; the drummers are Bahutu. The musicians are a closed corporation and relieve one another every month. After this interval they return home and are replaced by new ones. The arrival of the new musical guard is announced on the evening of the new moon with a particularly solemn drumbeat. The drummers are exempt from certain duties. Among them there was also a Christian from Issawi.

644 Etiquette. The king always eats alone, for it is proper to eat only with people of the same class.

The king's food and drink are prepared by Bahutu. He seems to have more confidence in the subjugated Bahutu than in the ruling Batutsi. Such elaborate precautions are taken to lessen the possibility of poisoning that the drinks are made in the king's compound from products brought there. The cookhouse in the king's kraal is called mubahutu.

[260] It is said that the king sleeps very late. During my three weeks' visit I never succeeded in seeing him before eleven o'clock in the morning, and only once did I have an opportunity to meet him between eleven and twelve o'clock. I had taken the measurements of a person and started to compare his blue eyes with my Martin color chart. When the people present saw the artificial glass eyes, they were so impressed that they immediately sent for Musinga. Musinga promptly dispatched a courier requesting that I send them to him to look at. I offered to bring him the eye chart in the afternoon when I was to pay him a visit, but the king's curiosity was too great; he couldn't wait until then, and that very morning he came into my camp, something he had never done before. On this occasion I observed that when his bagaragu came out of their huts to join the king's retinue, they greeted him by clapping their hands. In Ruanda this greeting is reserved for the king, whereas in Kiziba it is bestowed on important persons generally.

Musinga receives visitors toward four o'clock in the afternoon in the mulango (front part) of his main hut (kambele).

The kambele is on the edge of an enclosed elliptical court about 100 meters wide, at the focal points of which are two

644 of praise nor boasts about his deeds and the number of enemies
805 he has slain. During kichurasi they content themselves with simple clapping (kukoma mukono). People do not wear their better clothing or ornaments. Even the bulls are removed from the herds. All life that has its beginning during this period is regarded as unclean and is killed.

- [533] The period of mourning ends with the kichurasi full moon. They begin to beat the drums, very softly and very little on the first day, somewhat more on the second, until on the third day the regular beating is resumed. On the eleventh day the chiefs bring the king presents, get drunk on beer, and sacrifice sterile cows.

796 The end of the month of kichurasi is celebrated with a great
644 feast for which the ntore gather at court. The feast is called kukura kichurasi. [297] I could not determine whether this feast has any connection with the myth about the redeemer (mutabazi).

This is the time of the great ceremonies of the babandwa and of sacrifices (kuterekera).

805 The lunar month is divided up according to the phases of the moon. Thus they speak of: imboneko, "emerging moon"; kwezi, "waxing moon"; inzoro, "full moon"; mizima, "waning moon"; imfunda, "disappearing moon." These designations, however, do not correspond to the weeks. The weeks have five to six days and are determined by the relationship of free days to compulsory work days.

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Chapter 15

Religion and Related Matters

711 Ancestor Worship. The religious views of the Banyaruanda do not fit into a compact, harmonious system. This is probably due not only to the low level of development of their religion, but also to the dissimilarity of the Batutsi and Bahutu cultures which have influenced each other.

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171 Ancestor worship is the basis of religious beliefs in Ruanda as well as in the rest of the interlacustrine region.

Ethel M. Albert

593 her husband and to have a good life with him only if she is liked
716 by *Imana*.

564 The dowry represents wealth for the father. The average Tutsi
583 expects to receive a cow for his daughter, an average Hutu eight
[556] hoes. However, today the Hutu often and the Tutsi sometimes pay
[178] the dowry in cash. For the husband, the dowry purchases the
children produced by the woman during the term of their marriage.
For the young woman, the dowry is a measure of her social value.
She has discussed with other girls how much a man will have to
give for her. Young Tutsikazi flatter each other by saying that they
are certainly worth four cows—the dowry of a Tutsikazi of a very
good patrilineage. A Hutukazi may boast of the 2,500 Congo
francs (50 dollars) that were given for her, for everyone knows that
1,500 Congo francs (30 dollars) is the average for a Hutukazi. Or,
a poor woman who is slightly mad is overcome by shame, for
everyone knows that her father has given her in marriage without
demanding a dowry. The more one has given for a young woman,
[554] the higher her social status. The wife of a wealthy man will have
[556] more clothes and less work, more respect and less hardship, than
the wife of a poor man.

562 Although a young woman looks forward to marriage to rise
585 above her painfully low status as a female child, she knows very
well that what lies before her is a lifetime of work and that she
will for a long time be under the authority of others. She is in effect
sent from her father's household, where she works for her mother,
to her husband's household, where she works for her husband and
her mother-in-law. Regarding the sentiments of the husband
towards his wife, or of men in general towards women, it is enough
[538] to mention that in the rich oral literature of Burundi, there is not
one poem or song of love. At best, among the *amazina*—praise-
[533] poems, most of which praise the king or a generous patron or the
man himself as a warrior—there are several which praise a good
wife. She is praised for her cleverness, for her indefatigable efforts
on behalf of her husband, for the cleanness of the butter she churns,
and she may be given the compliment of comparison with a cow. In
all truth, a man may sometimes have a great love, or be infatuated
[152] with his wife or his mistress. He does not talk about it very much;
he would certainly not talk about it with strangers. At all events,
love is not relevant to married life except in the general form it
takes as the basis of the exchange of gifts and services between
superiors and inferiors.

541 Every married woman of every class and caste works for her
[543] husband. Often a bride goes to live in the same household with her